GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:300
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2016
Western Ghats
Kambhampati Dr. Hari Babu

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Western Ghats is one of the most fragile ecosystem in the country and if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether forest cover is on the decline in the Western Ghats during the period 2003 to 2012 and if so, the details thereof indicating the extent of decline, State-wise;
(c) whether a study report of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore has revealed large changes in the land usage in the Western Ghats and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
(d) the changes noticed in the flora and fauna of Western Ghats in the recent past; and
(e) the steps taken to preserve and conserve Western Ghats?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARAS (A) to (E) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 300 DUE FOR REPLY ON 6.12.2016 REGARDING "WESTERN GHATS" BY DR. KAMBHAMPATI HARIBABU:

(a) Yes, Sir. Western Ghats is a natural geological landscape stretching across about 1500 kilometers along the west coast of six states namely, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu and is a global biodiversity hotspot due to its rich biological diversity.

(b) The Forest Survey of India (FSI) has reported that no specific data on the extent of forest cover and its decline in the entire Western Ghats has been documented in the India State of Forest Report (ISFR).

(c) The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore in its study has reported changes in the land use in some selected areas of Western Ghats in the districts of Shimoga and Chikmangalur in Karnataka due to the activities such as plantation, cultivation and increased human settlements/habitation.

(d) Organisations such as the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have undertaken surveys of flora and fauna which indicate that complete documentation on the inventory on flora and fauna of Western Ghats is not available.

(e) The Government of India has taken several steps for the conservation of the biodiversity of Western Ghats. These include, establishment of Protected Areas (PAs) comprising 16 National Parks, 54 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 6 Conservation Reserves, 1 Community Reserves, 9 Tiger Reserves and 2 Elephant Reserves to provide stringent protection to both flora and fauna under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. In addition, the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has issued a draft notification dated 04.09.2015 for notifying an area of 56,825 square kilometres as ecologically sensitive covering six states in the Western Ghats, while permitting sustainable development in the area.

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